Community and service learning Universities students

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Abstract

This change, coupled with the reduction of the physical presence requirement from at least four to three years, means that international students and graduates who wish to settle in Canada can now enjoy a faster and easier way to obtaining Canadian citizenship. The five amendments that came into effect today benefit not only international graduates, but permanent residents who held temporary resident or protected person status, such as individuals on a study permit, work permit and/or Post-Graduation Work Permit. "We want all permanent residents in Canada to become citizens. That's our wish, because we value Canadian citizenship, we understand we are a community that continues to welcome people from all over the world. And we understand the importance and the positive role that immigrants play in our economy, in our society, and in our cultural life,"said Federal Minister of Immigration Ahmed Hussen at a press conference in Brampton, Ontario last week.

Keywords: Canada, citizenship, Education, post-graduation system

Introduction

One of the chief responsibilities of institutions of higher learning is providing students with appropriate disciplinary knowledge, skills and experiences that prepare them to tackle the multitude of issues they will encounter when they enter the workforce. Attention to the role of universities in preparing youth for the workforce has intensified in recent years, especially in African countries where there has been exponential growth in university enrolment and concerns raised about the quality of education students are receiving (Gudo, Olel & Oanda 2011; Nyangau 2014; Odhiambo 2014;

Waruru 2015). Community-based learning (CBL) experiences such as service-learning, practicums and internship opportunities for undergraduate students are increasingly becoming an integral component of African higher education (Dorasamy & Pillay 2010; Ferguson & Smith 2012). While there are many variations in how CBL is defined, there is broad consensus that this form of learning involves relevant and meaningful service activities in community settings to assist students in integrating their academic knowledge with practice in the field, providing them with opportunities to reflect critically on their learning and achieve academic, personal and civic learning objectives (Clayton, Bringle & Hatcher 2013).

One of the major benefits to universities is in strengthening linkages with host organisations, which may lead to the identification of new research opportunities and funding (Paul 2009). Universities may use CBL programs to market their courses and their graduates, which may lead to sustained or improved admission of students and employability of their graduates (Cooper & Orrell n.d.). Inclusion of CBL opportunities in higher education programs is important because it contributes to the development of professional competencies that may not be fostered in traditional classroom settings. This enables academic programs to respond to and meet the emerging job market needs of their respective programs, and thus enhance employability of their graduates, since they gain practical transferrable skills that employers look for (Haneef, Yusof & Amin 2006). Thus, it is not surprising that there is an increasing focus on developing and expanding CBL programs. This growth places great pressure on programs, especially those that provide experiential or work-integrated learning experiences to bridge the gap between academia and students' chosen careers (Oanda & Jowi 2012; Owuor 2007).

The participating host organisations gain access to an unpaid or partially compensated labour force who have a wealth of contemporary theoretical knowledge and are keen to apply such knowledge (Mgaya & Mbekomize 2014). Bridging the gap between academic programs and the needs of the job market can be supported through a range of well-designed CBL experiences such as practicums; however, our knowledge of what students and community organisations need in order to improve CBL experiences for all stakeholders has not kept pace (Gower & Mulvaney 2012; Teichler 2011).

Community-based Learning in a Kenyan Context

Higher education in Kenya has been undergoing rapid and dynamic change as efforts have been made to align learning programs with national development priorities stipulated in policy documents,

such as Kenya Vision 2030 (Odhiambo 2014; Republic of Kenya 2007). According to the Kenya Vision 2030 Second Medium Term Plan, the government will focus on matching education and training with the demand for skills required in the workplace (Republic of Kenya 2013). Relevant objectives for universities included in this nationwide initiative relate to the need to incorporate CBL for all students in higher education to enable them to acquire necessary on-the-job training skills before graduation.

Graduates from programs, such as Family and Community Sciences and related human services disciplines, face many challenges as employees with a broad range of human services organisations and government departments strive to address contemporary social and economic problems in communities throughout the country. Community-based learning experiences are especially vital for students enrolled in these types of programs in developing countries, such as Kenya, due to huge disparities in income, education and gender equity.

The power of CBL is enhanced when supported by best practices; however, evidence to enhance current practice is much less abundant in the African context than in North America. There are several examples of research studies examining community-based learning in the African context (Dorasamy & Pillay 2010; Linda, Mtshali & Engelbrecht 2013;

Naidoo & Devnarain 2009; Roos et al. 2005; Thomson et al. 2011), while others have conducted comparative studies of North American and Africanised models of CBL (Hatcher & Erasmus 2008; Stanton & Erasmus 2013). Using the educational philosophies of Dewey (North America) and Nyerere (Africa) to better understand these models, Hatcher and Erasmus (2008) reported that both systems expected CBL experiences to be transformative, enabling students to understand and relate to their real-world learning experiences in ways that would generate positive change for communities. Other South African studies emphasised that students in African higher education institutions needed more CBL opportunities to become professionally confident and competent, and be able to make deeper connections between their theoretical knowledge and professional skills through their CBL activities in the community (Dorasamy & Pillay 2010; Roos et al. 2005). Studies have also noted that understanding the CBL context plays a significant role in students' engagement and learning and in students gaining meaningful and productive experience (Alexander & Khabanyane 2013; Bheekie & van Huyssteen 2015; Bringle & Hatcher 2007). Similar findings have been observed with regard to the quality of CBL learning and longer term goals of community engagement (Linda, Mtshali

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& Engelbrecht 2013; Mahlomaholo & Matobako 2006; Osman & Castle 2006).

While there is a growing body of literature examining service-learning in South Africa, few studies have been conducted in Kenya. Opiyo-Newa (2012) conducted an assessment of internships and CBL programs at one university and found that students had positive attitudes towards CBL opportunities, but their writing and research skills needed improvement in order to achieve their learning outcomes. In an assessment of the Students' Community Service Program at their institution, Tumuti et al. (2013) found that two-week CBL experiences allowed students to develop a variety of skills valued by Kenyan employers, such as communication and interpersonal skills, learning and problem-solving, and self-development skills. They note the benefits of this program in countering criticism of the Kenyan educational system for alienating students from the lived realities of their communities resulting from its preoccupation with testing, training for white-collar employment and focus on globalisation at the expense of local needs. Finally, in a project related to this current study, challenges encountered by field supervisors were identified and used to inform the development of a new course to prepare students for CBL experiences (Kathuri-Ogola et al. 2015; VanLeeuwen et al. 2018). These challenges included helping Kenyan students to

develop reflective practice skills, articulating CBL learning goals, preparing students for demanding situations and workplaces, facilitating students' development in interpersonal communication, and a lack of understanding of students' field experiences. Thus, it is recognised that CBL is very desirable within the Kenyan context, and the implementation of these programs is key to their success for the various stakeholders.

Implementing Community-Based Learning in Higher Education

Integrating practicums within higher education has been typically accomplished in two ways, either through a block or a concurrent approach (Haneef, Yusof & Amin 2006; Weert 2011). In the concurrent approach, students complete a designated number of hours each week with the host organisation while completing other course requirements. In the block practicum approach, students engage in community-based learning experience without completing other course requirements. In many developing countries, institutions of higher learning opt for block practicums for their students (Johnson, Bailey & Padmore 2012). The preference for the block approach could be due to limited practicum opportunities within the vicinity of the respective universities. Many host organisations in developing countries are located in areas far from industrial hubs where most univer-

sities are located, and thus students have to compete for the few practicum opportunities available. The block approach provides an opportunity for students to participate in practicum opportunities during a set practicum period in locations that can be far away from the learning institution. Additionally, the large ratio of students per faculty member makes it easier for university administrators to manage the block system, as compared to the concurrent one.

Expectations of CBL Stakeholders

Strong relationships and partnerships are essential to CBL because of the functional role they play in establishing CBL activities, the implication of valuing reciprocity among all participants in CBL and the fundamental role played by collaboration (Bringle & Clayton 2013). The SOFAR model helps researchers and practitioners to delineate key stakeholders, or constituents, in CBL and the dynamics of these different relationships, especially since it differentiates between staff of community organisations and residents within the community (Bringle & Clayton 2013). For example, the interactions and relationships that students have with community organisation staff, who are frequently assuming some form of supervisory role in connection with the students, are different in many ways from their relationships with community residents (Bringle & Clayton 2013). These same researchers go on to discuss theoretical frameworks that

inform the nature of the various interactions between individuals and the outcomes of these interactions, according to exchange theory, and the concepts of closeness, equity and integrity. Other theoretical perspectives which have been used to inform our understanding of interactions and partnerships with community organisations include Enos and Morton's (2003) work which examines transactional and transformative relationships. Their model looks at the quality of outcomes resulting from interactions between various stakeholders involved with CBL. They view transactional partnerships as ad hoc, instrumental relationships where deep change is not expected, and long-term relationships are not expected, whereas with transformational relationships there are expectations for growth and change as the relationship develops over time.

Studies examining community partner relationships with students and the university have found that staff supervisors in community organisations are motivated to share their time and training to support student learning and expect valuable service from students (Basinger & Bartholomew 2006; Worrall 2007). Another study focusing on community partner perspectives revealed that staff members in these roles viewed these relationships as integral to the success of CBL. These individuals were willing to voice key challenges, such as poor communication,

and share recommendations with university partners to improve CBL partnerships (Sandy & Holland 2006). Other researchers discussed the importance of careful preparation and follow-through and the role of staff in community organisations as co-educators (Leiderman et al. 2002). Finally, staff in community organisations with a greater voice in the planning and implementing of CBL saw more benefits for their organisation (Miron & Moely 2006).

Information sharing between institutions of higher learning and field supervisors in the host organisations is an important process in developing community-university partnerships (Kathuri-Ogola et al. 2015). The flow of information can be affected by incongruent expectations between students and field supervisors. Mismatches between student expectations and the reality of their practicum experiences have been found to contribute to limited learning for the student (Olson & Montgomery 2000). This is largely because students bring a number of beliefs, attitudes and expectations about the nature of the practicum (McClam & Puckett 1991; Olson & Montgomery 2000). In addition, unclear expectations can lead to weak feedback mechanisms, a mismatch between university courses and labour market demands, reduced benefits for the host organisation and inefficient learning for the students (Klosters 2014).

There is a dearth of knowledge about expectations of practicum experiences in such disciplines as Family and Community Sciences and those related to community development from the perspective of community professionals who serve as field supervisors in host organisations (Nichols et al. 2013), and there is a particular gap in our knowledge in relation to African countries. Without evidence to support the development of local best practice, the impact of CBL may be diminished. As educators and CBL practitioners in the 21st century, we sought to contribute to current knowledge and practice by examining the expectations of field supervisors throughout the practicum experience. In particular, we were interested in exploring field supervisors' expectations of their own responsibilities and their expectations of practicum students. We were also interested in the various expectations students brought to their practicum experience and their beliefs around the future benefits of practicums. The specific aim of this article is to describe the expectations of field supervisors in organizations hosting students of a human service program at a Kenyan University who are undertaking CBL.

Methods

The community-based program at the university in Nairobi focuses on preparing graduates to deliver social services to individuals, families and communities. Emphasis is on the improvement of the

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welfare of people through community-based programs, which requires a thorough understanding of family and community dynamics. In order to prepare students effectively for these tasks, undergraduate students undertaking this program complete a mandatory 12-week block community-based practicum at the end of their third year of study. The practicum is a structured work experience in a professional setting, during which the student applies and acquires disciplinary and work-related knowledge and skills. As such, the practicum builds upon a student's coursework in the program as well as links theory with practical application. Each student is supervised by a field supervisor, who is an employee of the host organisation and oversees the student's day-to-day work. In addition, each student is assigned a member of the university faculty who provides support and evaluates the student. The students are usually attached to community programs serving children, youth, women, men, families, or groups with special needs. Generally the focus is on professional human service at the community level.

Fifteen organisations that hosted third-year practicum students during the May–August 2013 practicum session were sampled using purposive maximum variation sampling (Patton 2015). These organisations were situated in both urban and rural locations and had male and fe-

male field supervisors. Invitations for field supervisors to participate in the research were issued through telephone calls by the research team.

One field supervisor in each organisation participated in a face-to-face interview with a member of the research team. The interview included questions about field supervisors' understanding of the department's expectations of student learning activities during the practicum, knowledge about the academic preparation of students in the program of study and challenges associated with the supervisory role. Each participant was invited to share any further suggestions they had, that the university could consider to enhance the academic preparation of students for their practicum. Ethical approval for the research was obtained prior to participant recruitment from the Research Ethics Boards at the Kenyan university and the Canadian university where the investigators were employed at the time of data collection.

Qualitative data from the interviews with field supervisors was analysed using thematic analysis. An inductive six-step thematic analysis process was used to analyse the interview transcripts (Braun & Clarke 2006). This included steps of becoming familiar with the data, identifying initial themes, compiling a list of themes and sub-themes, organising the themes and sub-themes into a coding tree, naming and defining each theme, and provid-

ing a narrative description of the content of each sub-theme and illustrating them by selecting representative quotes. NVivo10 software was used to aid in organising the qualitative data. Since three researchers were involved in coding data, appropriate procedures to ensure consensus were used (Marshall 2011). These included collectively developing and defining the themes that emerged from the data. Then, two researchers independently coded the data, and then three researchers worked together to come to a consensus on the codes assigned to the data.

Results

A total of 15 field supervisors participated in the study. The field supervisors included six men and nine women. Fourteen of the field supervisors were drawn from non-governmental development agencies and one from a government department. The two overarching themes used to organise the data focused on those field supervisors who had clear expectations of the student practicum experience, and those who had unclear expectations of the student practicum experience.

Clear Expectations

Six field supervisors exhibited some level of understanding of the expectations of their role in working with practicum students. The main contributors to this clear understanding of supervision expectations were: explanations provided by the students about their curriculum at the university and supervisors' work-related experience. For one supervisor, this resulted from personal experience rather than through prior interaction with the institutions of higher learning.

Nine field supervisors indicated unclear expectations of the students' practicum experience. The two themes in which field supervisors experienced unclear expectations focused on: (1) student abilities, learning goals, and their contributions to the host organisations, and (2) the student's academic program of study and level and form of academic support by the university to supervisors.

Unclear expectations about student abilities emerged as a challenge. Most of the field supervisors interviewed indicated that they did not know what students were capable of, and it often took a long period of time to identify appropriate activities to assign to the students. A lack of understanding of the students' abilities resulted in unrealistically high expectations of students by their respective field supervisors. For example, some field supervisors assumed that the students would do day-to-day work activities without structured orientation and guidance.

Basically, the challenges of supervision come during the initial stages because first of all they [students] are new, it is their first time… and they are yet to internalize the project purpose and activi-

ties. Even after this, the first 2 to 3 weeks, they get a lot of difficulties (FS8).

Notably, some field supervisors were not clear about what the learning goals of the students were so that the organization could provide the necessary learning experiences.

At first I did not know because I told them that I felt they [students] were in the wrong place. Because yours [program] is Community Resource Management and we have no resources that we can manage at the District alone… I felt that they will not be able to learn or fit and get the required experience. But they have managed (FS7).

In some cases, the field supervisors indicated ways in which the students were able to make contributions to the host organisation, although they did not always have an expectation that this would be an outcome of the practicum. An interesting opportunity for creativity and innovation emerged for students who were placed in an environment in which there were no clear expectations of them. This was demonstrated in the flexibility and participatory approach adopted by some host organisations – they included the students in identifying the relevant activities and program they wished to be involved with.

We allow them to come up with an idea… or a program… we become open so they can come up with the ideas (FS6).

Students were also given the opportunity to be creative in defining their own experiences due to lack of expectations.

Some students come up with a write up of what they are supposed to do… so we come up with a timetable…

Some field supervisors did not understand the course structure and the expected format for reporting on the progress of the students. This was highlighted by one of the field supervisors:

Basically if you have trainings, it can help us know in depth, what course they are taking and what kind of activities we need to engage them in because when they come here what we do is try to fit them into our system, but also I can't tell at the end of the day if it is working towards achieving the objective of the department (FS8).

To enhance their understanding of the practicum expectations, the field supervisors proposed improvement to and standardization of documentation provided to the host organization.

Normally, they [students] are supposed to come with documents indicating objectives… a form where they have their objectives so that when I am with them I can be able to know what they are to achieve at the end of the practicum (FS4).

Several field supervisors indicated that they expected the provision of an orientation program.

I had no idea what was expected from the students… because they were just brought to me to supervise them (FS2).

An orientation program could contribute greatly to a long-term and successful relationship between the host organisation and the academic program.

We need to first of all start a relationship with the institution and the department so that we are able to get clear information on expectations of the department and expectations of the students… so we are able to help them achieve the department's expectations and at the end of the day, we as an organisation achieve what we want from them and also help the students achieve some of their expectations (FS8).

Further, supervisors suggested that more interaction between field supervisors and faculty members was needed before the practicum began.

You should call for a short 2 or 3 day induction for your supervisors so that when you send your students then you know they are in the right hands… because if a supervisor misinterprets the expectations then they may not be able to guide the students (FS13).

The field supervisors highlighted the importance of prior interaction with university faculty to harmonise expectations of the entire practicum placement.

When I started supervising them [students], I felt I should have met their lecturer before assigning duties to them (FS3).

In addition to more knowledge about the academic requirements and an orientation program, the field supervisors expected practicums to be coordinated to a greater extent. In some instances, there was random placement of students without matching their skills with appropriate activities within the host organisation. One field supervisor indicated:

If you know the students' area of specialization one would be able to place them in the appropriate department and allocate a relevant activity. … but if you don't have a wider knowledge of what a student expects from the attachment you may assume and leave some things out which may be very important to the student (FS3).

In other cases, students were deployed to departments within the host organizations without clear terms of reference. In addition, the host organisations sometimes did not have adequate time to prepare to host students.

If we are informed before they come at least we can prepare a job description… Otherwise, if they just come without adequate prior notice, we will only allocate to them the most pressing job like filing which may not provide an avenue for adequate learning (FS4).

Discussion

In this section, we first highlight and discuss several key findings from our

study and identify several recommendations based on our findings. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study and suggestions for future research.

From a holistic examination of our results, we came to the realisation that many of the relationships examined in this project align with Enos and Morton's (2003) transactional relationships since they operate within existing structures in which partners come together because each has something that the other perceives as useful. The CBL relationships in this instance could be characterised as instrumental, with limited commitments and minimum disruption of the regular work of the organisation.

Our findings indicated that there were reciprocal benefits for the students and the organisations, such as students utilising their knowledge to contribute to program development in the organisations. It is important that organisations hosting CBL students understand that benefits to the organisations can result when students are given the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge (Mgaya & Mbekomize 2014), in addition to students gaining important applied professional experience (Astin, Sax & Avalos 1999; Giles & Eyler 1994).

One challenge identified that could limit the benefit of the CBL experience was that the field supervisors often had very little or no prior notification that they would be supervising a practicum student, resulting in a lack of adequate preparation to host the student. In addition, limited resources meant that many host organisations did not have orientation programs or a supportive infrastructure for student practicum activities. Faced with these situations, the field supervisors assigned tasks and duties randomly with little or no regard to the students' ability or learning goals. Such mismatched activities would certainly contribute to restricted learning (Olson & Montgomery 2000). However, an interesting finding was that, in some cases, this lack of planned activities for students on practicum enhanced creativity and innovativeness. This is an example of the resilience of some students who have the ability to both gain important knowledge and skills and contribute to the host organisation even when little or no planning or preparation has been made for their practicum experience within the host organisation. This experience during CBL can contribute to students gaining transformative real-world learning experiences (Hatcher & Erasmus 2008), especially in a country such as Kenya in which organisations have few resources to devote to planning or preparation for student learning experiences.

A key finding of this study is that we identified a lack of clarity around practicum expectations for most of the field supervisors interviewed. This was attribut-

ed to insufficient communication between the university and the host organisation and, at times, within the host organisation itself. This is a salient finding as poor communication can hinder collaborative relationships between practicum host organisations and universities (Bringle & Clayton 2013; Kathuri-Ogola et al. 2015; Sandy & Holland 2006). The field supervisors observed that there were weak or no formal structured linkages between their organisations and the university. This made it difficult for them to understand the student's learning goals, which resulted in wasting valuable time for practicum learning. This was made worse by poor orientation within the host organisation and between the host organisation and the university. These findings are particularly problematic if universities want to develop and maintain positive relationships with organisations and improve their image in the community (Mgaya & Mbekomize 2014). Other researchers have found that universities are perceived as taking resources from organisations, resulting in few benefits to the community (Nichols et al. 2013). It is clear that greater effort by universities is needed to develop stronger linkages with community organisations to ensure the sustainability and long-term success of these partnerships (Janke 2013). It is also clear that greater effort needs to be made to communicate and clarify expectations for field supervisors. Providing opportu-

nities for field supervisors to be involved in both planning and implementing CBL could greatly contribute to improving clarity of practicum expectations and to greater engagement and benefits for the organisations (Miron & Moely 2006).

The community-based program included in this study is a relatively new program of study in Kenya and many field supervisors were not familiar with its content and structure. This resulted in the field supervisors having inconsistent expectations of the students' abilities. As a result, there were delays in assigning tasks and identifying opportunities that would contribute to students' learning objectives. This lack of awareness is understandable since, in Kenya, the human resource structure of most organisations is designed along the lines of traditional disciplines such as sociology, psychology, social work, political science, and development studies. However, the multifaceted nature of contemporary social problems requires both traditional and emerging disciplines to work towards systematic and sustainable solutions. Thus, in developing countries, such as Kenya, this means working towards ensuring that academic disciplines prepare graduates for the workplace (Republic of Kenya 2013).

The field supervisors had little or no understanding of the course structure and the centrality of the practicum in the fulfillment of its objectives. This led to de-

lays in submission of the essential reporting materials and gaps in some key areas of student assessment. It was not surprising that some supervisors mentioned that the reporting format was both unclear and tedious. This was perhaps exacerbated by their viewing the task as additional to their normal workload yet not attracting commensurate compensation. The capacity of university faculty and staff to understand the perspective of the community partner has been identified as one of the top determinants of an effective relationship (Sandy & Holland 2006), so work is needed to address field supervisors' concerns associated with these administrative and assessment tasks.

Our results indicate that benefits could result from incorporating a pre-practicum experience in the curriculum. Enhanced preparation for the practicum experience could positively impact students' learning experience during practicum, thereby supporting national and United Nations efforts to promote quality education as leading to employment in developing countries, including Kenya (Republic of Kenya 2007). From our research in Kenya, we suggest that the following should be incorporated in the program in preparation for the practicum experience: support for the development of reflective practice; articulation of practicum expectations; mental preparation for demanding situations; and enhanced interpersonal communication skills (Van Leeuwen et

al. 2018). This pre-practicum preparation could take a number of forms, such as integration of brief CBL experiences into coursework prior to the practicum experience. For example, students could be required to complete volunteer work as part of the requirements of the program. This would create continuity in the learning process and exposure to community-based projects. Alternatively, it could be achieved through a series of guest speakers from relevant institutions or organizations serving various populations, or talks by members of the community. This could create partnership opportunities with host organisations and contribute to the role of staff in community organisations as co-educators (Leiderman et al. 2002).

Based on our findings, the practicum experience could be enhanced in five ways. (1) Holding structured and regular faculty–field supervisor consultative meetings could help to harmonise everyone's expectations of the practicum experience and the role that field supervisors have in the development of a learning contract. (2) Organising a tripartite orientation program, including students, field supervisors and faculty, to identify the opportunities, challenges and potential solutions to the challenges. This would entail involvement of the stakeholders in the development of orientation materials, which could be made available on the departmental website to reduce the cost of

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printing and updating material as knowledge evolves or the program curriculum changes. (3) Using standardized documentation to record challenges and report successes that address concerns raised by community partners. (4) Developing long-term reciprocal partnerships between the university and host organisations. This would help to ensure that students gain required practical experience and further develop new skills that could lead to transformational learning and students being adequately prepared to work in a changing social, economic and political landscape. This form of arrangement would allow the host organisations to plan ahead for the arrival of students, and ensure that they receive adequate supervisory direction and support as well as access to the necessary physical and financial resources to follow through on their learning activities. In addition, this would allow community organizations to allocate time for student mentoring as part of the supervisors' workload, while making sure that essential work tasks were completed. (5) Supporting greater interaction between students, faculty and field supervisors in the development of student learning contracts. This would ensure that the student's goals and objectives for their practicum experience correspond with those of the host organisation's program and the designated field supervisor.

We identified several limitations of this study. The study was limited to one academic program of one university in Kenya, and the results may not be applicable to diverse academic programs in other countries. The department was relatively new, established seven years prior to the study in a non-traditional discipline. Results from a more established academic program may yield different results. Also, the responses were limited to the views of one field supervisor per organization even in cases where the students had more than one point of supervision. The views of field supervisors willing to participate in this study may differ from those of other field supervisors.

The first American and British fanzines appeared in the early 1930s, concurrent with new technologies of what we now call desktop publishing; using stencils and gelatin, fan writers could quickly and cheaply copy volumes of commentary on fans and fandom, plus, of course, the earliest fan fiction. The term "fan fiction" itself was also coined in the 1930s, signifying amateur writing by self-identified fans rather than the transformative works derived from media and literary fandoms that we know today. This linguistic and intellectual shift needs to be queried further (note 1), but from the 1930s through the 1990s, bound and printed fan fiction was circulated, read, and discussed by numerous social communities in science

fiction (and fantasy) fandom. In her book *The Battle of the Sexes in Science Fiction* (2002), Justine Larbalestier describes publisher Hugo Gernsback, best known as the founder of *Amazing Stories* in 1926 and later memorialized through SFF fandom's annual Hugo Award, using the word "fan" to describe "the passionate readers" of his magazine—and, "strange to say," many of them were women—but Larbalestier's focus is on fans as readers and writers of genre rather than as transformative readers and writers (2002, 23). Helen Merrick's *The Secret Feminist Cabal* (2009) covers similar ground and introduces a number of women fans as readers and writers in the 1930s and later on, but she too avoids discussion of fans as readers and writers of transformative texts, and focuses on only a small number of specific fanzine titles as case studies rather than examining the medium more broadly. Further, both of these works are classified and presented as volumes of science fiction studies rather than of fan studies or literary history, though functionally they can be read as examples of both, since both examine literary production and consumption. This lack of attention is due to the low cultural value put on fan writing.

While the history of fan writing is convoluted at best, its bibliography is neglected altogether. Very few bibliographies of fan writing exist, and almost all of them are created by and for fans themselves. This is largely because of changing practices of authorship in fandom; early works were often written under fans' real names, and so what bibliographies there are run the risk of "outing" them (note 2). They are also often out of print and hard to find. One example is the *Trexindex*, a three-issue fanzine with seven supplements issued between 1977 and 1993. Subtitled *The Complete Encyclopedia of Star Trek Fan Magazines*, it aimed to index all fan stories and fan authors writing during that period. (There are also bibliographic lists created as finding aids for fanzines in library holdings, and while these are public, they are limited in scope and context.)

Bibliography itself, loosely defined, is the study and analysis of texts, their production, and their transmission. As a discipline, it is much more than the dry lists of books and technical data found in library catalogues that describe material objects; rather, to quote D. F. McKenzie, one of its most important champions, it reveals the history of texts in society itself, investigating "what their production, dissemination, and reception reveal about past human life and thought" (1992, 298). While fan studies shares similar concerns in uncovering and analyzing fannish regard for the creation and use of fan texts, the field has not made use of book history's methodology to do so. I would consider this an argument in favor of examining the methodology, and the material, more closely rather than disregarding

them altogether, as I was urged to. To quote Leslie Howsam: "Like social class (in E. P. Thompson's famous formulation), the book is not so much a category as a process: books happen; they happen to people who read, reproduce, disseminate, and compose them; and they happen to be significant. The book can be a force for change and the history of the book documents that change" (2006, 5).

At the same time, the field of book history is heavily invested in maintaining and reinforcing the traditional status of print culture, and especially of Western, Anglo-European printed discourse, and this investment has its drawbacks too. Indeed, studies of the book in Eastern and various indigenous cultures are only a few decades old; Henry Jenkins's *Textual Poachers* (1992) predates studies of the book in the pre-Columbian Americas and a great deal of work on the book in Eastern and Islamic cultures, among others (Mignolo 1995; Suarez and Woudhuysen 2013). This very narrow discourse is currently expanding, but it nonetheless remains invested in microdefinitions of—and so, I would argue, microaggressions to—nonmale and nonwhite writing, reading, and textual circulation. And so, the "objective" (I use this word with awareness of all its connotations) form of the "book" is a printed codex created by and for a Western, patriarchal culture that emphasizes the public masculine voice and pointedly minimizes all others.

How then can we define a "book," when we have already acknowledged its wide range of meanings? The production of the printed codex, at least, has been best defined and revealed through Robert Darnton's famous communications circuit, a theoretical model created in 1982 that centers the book as object in a schema that runs from the author to the publisher (if the bookseller does not assume that role), the printer, the shipper, the bookseller, and the reader. The reader completes the circuit because he influences the author both before and after the act of composition. Authors are readers themselves…So the circuit runs full circle. It transmits messages, transforming them en route, as they pass from thought to writing to printed characters and back to thought again. (Darnton [1982] 2005, 11)

Various interventions in this model have been formulated over the years (Adams and Barker 2006; Phelps 1996; McDonald 1997; Secord 2000; Bachleitner 2009; Weel 2015), but none of them query this basic context of masculine production or public consumption, nor how it functionally removes women both as writers and as tradeswomen. Moreover, this model is increasingly recognized as a picture of production during a very specific time period. In her 2014 essay "Do Women Have a Book History?" Michelle Levy points out these shortcomings, noting,

Rethinking [Darnton's] communication circuit in terms of gender compels us

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to confront the gender asymmetry that existed within commercial publishing…Gender complicates some of the fundamental assumptions embedded in the communication circuit, which, by assigning discrete roles to various groups, obscures the overlapping roles that many individuals, and it seems, many women, played within the print marketplace. (312)

However, by focusing explicitly on commercial publishing, Levy too bypasses manuscript culture. There are currently no models of the book that consider manuscript publication—the form in which most women's writing was disseminated and read for some 300 years. Nor have there been any expansive studies of private press or zine production, through which both SF fandom at large and women in particular disseminated texts through the second half of the twentieth century; nor of digital publication and print-on-demand, forms that are indisputably characteristic of contemporary fannish publishing and reading.

Indeed, the patriarchal print model is only just starting to be disrupted. Margaret Ezell, in her 1999 volume *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print,* goes into more detail on the actual materiality of women's writing and publishing, particularly in the 16th through 18th centuries. She points out that women's writing and its circulation in manuscript form, as forms of social authorship and interaction, are critical not only to literary con-

text but also to its reception by contemporary scholars, noting that

having a "voice" is equated with being in print, with the obvious implication that "work" is equated with print texts and anything else, manuscript copy in particular, is only "silence." The sole criterion of the success of these generations of women writers is the amount they *published,* with no mention of the amount they actually *wrote.*Intentionally or not, we thus train our students to classify literary activity with print as the superior mode and to employ false gender dichotomies when interpreting early modern texts. (43–44, italics original)

The insight that Ezell applies to early modern texts I apply to contemporary ones: by minimizing or ignoring digital production in favor of print, we erase significant patterns of production and consumption and deny the true impact of readers and writers on the intellectual, social, and economic fields of textual markets. Further, by erasing the larger history of fan texts aside from or prior to media fandom, we create an ahistorical narrative in which contemporary communities and texts are intellectually disconnected from previous ones, and thus minimized and decontextualized. In doing so we perpetuate and reinforce textual hierarchies in which print is valorized at the expense of the manuscript and the digital, masculine production at the expense of the feminine. We endorse intel-

lectual values that privilege a specific image of the canon in our classrooms and culture. Unpacking these paradigms reveals a great deal about how the discourse of fandom is shaped by the discourse of the printed book.

Locating the space and materials of fannish publishing

When literary historians consider the history of women's writing, they typically look at how women operated in the public, "male" space of print publication as compared to the private, "feminine" space of manuscript publication. In the 16th and 17th centuries women writers built communities to share writing that they could disseminate in manuscript, or handwritten form: private, gendered literary production for a specific audience of cultural "insiders" (often known as "one's friends"). We should consider how women fans' zine and Web publishing can function as an analog to historical manuscript circulation, especially since such fans are preoccupied with controlling access to their literary endeavors, how texts reflect small communities with specific personal ties, and how their writings often were and are denigrated by predominantly male publishers and scholars. In short, we should think how we might locate women's fan writing as part of the greater history of women's literary writing and production. By revising contemporary narratives of both book history and fan history, we can reread women's

work in the literary and book trades from the 17th and the 21st centuries as a function of operating with and subverting patriarchal norms of literary production. In other words, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

Problematizing the space of production is a key point of entry into considering how we value the public, commercial space versus the private space of affective labor, especially given that one of the major fannish mores is to never profit materially from one's writing. (Indeed, some of the greatest objections I have seen to the popularity of *Fifty Shades of Gray* and similar novels is their authors' betrayal of the fannish community by republishing their work for money!) A passage in Margot Adler's *Drawing Down the Moon*, an ethnographic study of contemporary neopaganism first published in 1979 and revised in 1986, sets a scene that would have been very familiar—except for the nudity—to fans in previous generations:

Eight or nine people sat around a long low table that was covered with stacks of freshly-printed pages…The sound of friendly chatter mingled with the rustling of pages, the steady firing of a stapling machine, and the occasional crunching of popcorn, which was being passed around in a large bowl…Only one person in the room was wearing any clothes, a fact that didn't seem noticeable after a few minutes…Everyone—dressed or undressed—was engaged in the business of

the day, which was sorting, collating, and stapling, and mailing the 74th issue of *The Green Egg*. (265–66)

Collating parties were a staple, as it were, of zine publishing. Zines proliferated widely in the late 1970s, moving beyond their roots in science fiction fan communities and into the punk, feminist, and New Age movements. Zines took multiple forms, from letterzines (typed copies of correspondence that were then disseminated to all members of a textual conversation) to bound volumes. Sometimes they imitated traditional newspapers or magazines in their format, typefaces, and paper; at other times they appeared as codices, with colophons and illustrated soft or hard covers. They would usually be distributed by subscription, with a set number of copies produced for a set number of subscribers, occasionally with a handful of extras that could be sold or given to others outside the group. Zines were usually made in someone's home (a private, domestic space), but they would often have significant public, and so "published," lives. Print runs could number anywhere between ten and several hundred, depending on the number of subscribers and the size of the potential nonsubscriber audience. Popular issues of zines could have multiple editions; colophons for certain *Star Trek* zines supply information such as "fifth edition, three hundred and fifty copies." Some of the most popular

titles ultimately had two or even three thousand copies made and sold. Zines were thus not always small or inexpensive productions; they required a number of people to provide content, labor, and materials.

We might then see contemporary fannish desktop and Web publishing as an inversion of historical printing practices. The very nomenclature of English and colonial American "printing houses" ties into a patriarchal government and guild system that legally required printers to work in their own homes for tax and census purposes, effectively combining the private and public spheres into one. For example, English printers were required by the Ordinance of 1653 to exercise their trade "in their respective Dwelling Houses and not elsewhere" (Firth and Rait 696). Women's labor was often invisible except in cases where the men were absent: jailed or dead. While these laws were not enforced in the American colonies, they (and particularly their emphasis on authority and power) have nonetheless shaped our conceptions of books as printed volumes. Adrian Johns similarly notes that the "bifurcated representation of the workplace as a home *and* as a business was consequently made central to the production and reception of printed books" (1998, 125, italics original). In other words, the known site of production legitimized a text in a way that the laborers who produced it did not.

In contrast, today's home or self-publishing is now considered among the least respectable forms of literary endeavor, with fan fiction even lower because it is written for pleasure rather than profit. The "home" that was originally identified as the man's purview is now identified as the woman's, and this shift is key to redefining the discourse of public and private publication. Similarly, shifts in labor resources redefine our perceptions of activity; women's work in the 17th-century print industry combined text with textiles, including sorting rags for quality to be made into paper and sewing paper sheets for pamphlets and book bindings. Women's reading and writing have long been regarded with suspicion. To quote Elizabeth Long, it is always women who read "too much," and this criticism is leveled at both housewives and spinsters: "reading requires social control lest it take over from more worthy pursuits," namely more traditional (and feminine) domestic duties (2003, 13). Writing is equally suspicious, and publication not even to be thought of; redefining the home as the location of these labors subverts the intellectual power of masculine, public discourse. Consider the import of Virginia Woolf's classic text *A Room of One's Own*, which considers space and time to write as necessities.

Further, Woolf herself co-owned Hogarth Press with her husband; she sorted the type for their fledgling press and typeset portions of the works they published; she learned bookbinding at the age of nineteen and continued to bind books throughout her life. And she was not the only one; women were an important part of the Modernist publishing scene. A recent biography of Blanche Knopf by Laura Claridge, *The Lady with the Borzoi: Blanche Knopf, Literary Tastemaker Extraordinaire* (2016), describes in great detail how Knopf cofounded that famous press with her husband, with whom she too sewed by hand the sheets for the books they published, as well as working as editor and agent, but was systematically written out of the history of the firm. Woolf as writer and publisher likewise speaks to the nature of book as object, with what Lisa Maruca calls "production values": "the social standards or community agreements as to what is worthy of notice and is best to uphold, and likewise what must be repressed in order to maintain these standards—that are promulgated both *through* the act of textual production and *about* textual production" (2007, 7).

When we consider women's history in publishing—whether as writers, typesetters, binders, or other laborers—we need to consider the problems of invisibility. At this point in time, all too often books themselves are not seen; we usually don't consider the sourcing of paper, bindings, ink, etc. because we are so distanced from it. Looking at physical materials means a

great deal in considering how they came to be. What, if anything, does it mean that different copies of the same issue of a fanzine are printed on different-colored paper? In some cases, these differentiate editions, while in others it indicates no artistic intention but only what paper was cheapest at the time. On the other hand, some zine producers went to great lengths to obtain high-quality paper and other materials for their zines.

For example, the *Darkover Newsletter*, published by the fan club Friends of Darkover, saw 70 issues over 20 years, with a subscriber base ranging between 100 and 1,000 as Darkover and Marion Zimmer Bradley waned and waxed in popularity. (On Friends of Darkover publications generally, see Coker 2008.) Paper color changed with each issue, and was rarely repeated. Darkover fans I spoke to gave no reason for this beyond a shrug and "Well, that's what we had to work with." Presumably the various lots of colored paper were what they could easily and cheaply obtain. The Friends of Darkover published several titles in addition to the *Newsletter*, including *Starstone*, a serial that lasted five issues; eight different one-shot titles, including *The Darkover Cookbook*; and a small pamphlet with a poem by Bradley called "The Maenads." This last is the single exception I have found to the pattern of their paper usage. It was printed in three editions with different-colored paper co-

vers: the first edition was gray and ran 25 copies, the second was green and ran 75 copies, and the third was yellow and does not indicate the size of its print run. In short, fan work in print requires not only significant labor, expense, and materials, but also the knowledge and expertise to combine these into a print publication.

Fanzine publishing has become more expensive because of declining mechanisms of production, as well as the migration of much of fandom to online forums. Printed collections of fan fiction have largely been reduced to special publications, sometimes crowd-funded on Kickstarter or similar online venues. Agent with Style, a fan publisher that specializes in reprinting vintage fanzines, must do so with significant markup. For instance, the first issue of the classic K/S zine *Nome*, edited by Victoria Clark, M. V. M. Varela, and Barbara L. Storey, was published in 1979 and displayed no cover price. Used copies have been found priced $1–$9; a brand new reprint from AWS costs $22, or $29 for overseas orders, though this does include shipping and handling costs. (Other issues with the publisher and its productions have been reported; Most commercial printers today require a minimum number of copies before they will take a job on, with expenses increasing as page counts rise.

Nonfiction fanzines are much shorter than fan fiction zines: 4 to 30 pages versus 60 to 150 pages, on average. The shorter

fanzines generally are similar to flyers or circulars, offering book and film reviews and conference information; the larger ones tend to be fiction anthologies. Both are reflective of their primary audiences. Fan fiction fanzines have become an outlet for a niche market of vintage collectors rather than a viable introduction to a fandom, while nonfiction fanzines are aimed at an insular and preexisting audience that is already a community. Because they are intended for very different audiences, they are functionally invisible to one another's audiences.

The invisibility of the material object becomes a point of erasure: what is not seen becomes nonexistent. A major change in fan publishing in recent years has been the migration from print fiction fanzines to online archives, with a seemingly gender-based segregation taking place at access points. The shorter sf zines, in print and online, tend to be created by men for male audiences, while women fans adopt closed online communities that replicate a form of private space. (A brief survey of Efanzines.com, an online archive that contains pdf copies of sf zines that were once print and have gone digital but maintained their print layouts, demonstrates that most of the readers and writers there are men.) This shift is perhaps best described in a report on the 2014 WorldCon by Gavia Baker-Whitelaw (2014):

During discussions about how to attract a new generation [to] the convention, I'd hear people talking about how the Internet is isolating and incomprehensible—or how it lacked the personal touch of fanzine mailing lists. One audience member asked what had happened to slash fanfic. Why didn't he see it in fanzines any more? What made it die out? Apparently he was unaware of the vast quantity of slashfic constantly being posted online, including in older fandoms like *Star Trek*, which long ago made the jump from print to Internet.

When I read this statement during a conference the following April, the room laughed. To fan scholars, the idea of slash writing having died out is absurd, because of both the quantity of it that is produced daily and the quantity of scholarship studying it that has been produced over the past three decades—but the vast majority of both is by women. That male fans could ask about its supposed disappearance at one of the major genre conventions indicates how very gendered both this form of literature and its points of access are.

The results of this study led to our identifying several topics for future research. It would be useful to conduct a more detailed examination of the role of the field supervisor in facilitating the development of students' professional knowledge and skill. Research that focuses on what field supervisors expect and

how to effectively communicate this to students prior to the practicum would also be beneficial. Further exploration of the effectiveness of learning contracts in communicating student learning expecta-tions to their field supervisor would be useful in the further development of community-based practicums, as well as research on the role of student reflections during and after the practicum.

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